

TIPS FOR NEW LEADERS

adapted from Girl Scouts of Broward County, SU 619

In order to have a better understanding of what leading a troop is all about, take advantage of the many resources available to you:

Attend your Service Unit meetings: These meetings are held once a month in your area. The Service Unit Manager and other service team members will have up-to-date information on activities that your girls may participate in. In addition, leaders with more experience attend the meetings and can share valuable information with you.

Go to the training classes: When you sign up to be a leader, you must take your training in the level you will be a leader in. The Service Unit Manager will have a schedule for the classes. Council also offers dozens of other classes on such things as crafts, songs and games, first aid, etc.

Read the age-level handbook for leaders: The books have information that will help you get started with your individual program.

Visit Council and National GSUSA websites often for ideas:

Chesapeake Bay Council www.cbgsc.org

Girl Scouts of the USA www.girlscouts.org

Use the older girls in your service unit: Many would love to help you with your first few meetings, teaching the younger girls songs and games.

Talk with the parents of the girls in your troop: Find out what skills the parents have that you can use in your meetings. If you need help holding a parent committee meeting, ask your Troop Program Coach to help.

Talk to the girls: Ask them what they want to do. Remember the girl is first in Girl Scouting. If the girls are in kindergarten or first grade, limit the choices you ask them to make, so as to not overwhelm them.

Progression is the key: We crawl before we walk, and we walk before we run. Remember to introduce trips, camping, and skills as a progression. Brownies are not ready for a weekend camping trip without first having an outdoor evening event; then an indoor overnight, then a back yard campout. Daisy trips should be limited to around town; Brownies can venture further for a day trip; Juniors can travel for a weekend; Teens are ready for cross-country and international travel.

In the course of the year, you should do some of the following. How many of each depends on the girls' preferences. A balanced schedule makes it easier to maintain the girls' interest and enthusiasm:

Service projects participating in larger ones with other groups or small ones such as planting flowers at the troop's school or meeting place.

Arts and Crafts geared to the appropriate age and developmental level. Arts and crafts should be selected with an eye toward helping girls develop physical skills such as eye/hand coordination and fine motor dexterity, as well as making something fun and pretty.

Games especially those with a strong physical component to get girls up and moving around.

Outdoor events whether it is overnight camping or something as simple as an outdoor hike.

Multi-level events with other troops from your service unit or neighboring service units.

Learn the **Girl Scout Promise** and understand the **Law**

Learn songs there are dozens of resources for great Girl Scouting songbooks, websites, CDs. Take a look at the songbooks and CDs offered by Council's Bay Shop to get you started. Or, invite an experienced songster to your troop to teach songs!

Take pictures often and maintain a scrapbook not only for you, but for the girls too. They'll have so much fun looking through it in the future, and new girls will love seeing what was done in the past. It's a wonderful promotional tool to use during beginning year parent meetings too!

Keep parents informed with phone calls, newsletters, parent meetings.

*Most of all, remember Juliette Low's words of wisdom:
"Strive to provide girls with both education and fun.
But if you cannot do both, make sure they have the fun."*